

parol proof. The claimant, with his witnesses, to appear before the commission and make out his case, and the commission to cross-examine on behalf of the United States.

There are several vital objections to this scheme. One is, the enormous extent of territory which necessarily must be allotted to each commission, even if the number be increased to more than sixty, and, consequently, the onerous charge laid upon each claimant for pension, of traveling expenses for himself and witnesses, time lost in waiting for the action of the commission, delay and necessary cost of living at the place appointed for the examination both for himself and his witnesses, and the further fatal fact that no means are provided by which he can compel the attendance of his witnesses before the tribunal.

Many pension claimants, nay, most of them, are in absolute poverty; many are widows, living day by day upon daily labor; many are children, without means and without support, wholly unable to travel fifty, one hundred, or two hundred miles themselves, and absolutely powerless to induce the witnesses to attend.

Take the great States of New York or Pennsylvania, for instance. Not more than three districts can be formed in these, and the pensioners or claimants for pension are scattered all over the State, in hamlets, far off the ordinary routes of travel, and distant from the point selected for holding the commission. To such persons this scheme amounts to absolute denial of their claims.

Take, again, the number of claimants in each of these districts who will be notified to appear; and suppose that they do, in fact, appear. What long and weary waiting, at personal expense, before the case may be reached!

Take, again, the ordinary fact, that the individual witnesses whose testimony is requisite to prove the case, are scattered in different, widely-separated districts, each to be examined by the commission in each district; and thus the claimant, even if able to attend at the place of his own residence, cannot, by possibility, attend at the examination of his own most important witnesses.

Mr. Bentley has looked at this plan, as is natural, from the side of advantage to the Government only. But the pension laws were not made for the benefit of the Government, but for the benefit of the pensioner; and the Government has no right to throw unnecessary obstacles in the way of the claimant; especially has it no right to crowd out the most meritorious, because the poorest, class of claimants, by regulations which, in practice, forbid the assertion of a just and equitable claim, by requiring an expenditure of time and money which their straitened means will not allow.

If such Commissions are to be appointed, their number must be very largely increased, and the Commissioners must visit the pension claimants, not compel the claimant to come to them; and such work can scarcely be done by any force much less in number and expense than the present system of examining surgeons.

Do not go to the trouble and expense of executing applications for bounty under the Equalization Bill until it has become a law. As soon as there seems to be a chance of its passage, hordes of sharpers will be trying to get the claims of soldiers into their control. As soon as the bill has been passed by both Houses of Congress and signed by the President, a proper form of application will be adopted by the accounting officers of the Treasury Department. Any other form than this will be valueless. Keep your discharge-papers and other documents in your own

hand. When the bill is passed, the subscribers to the NATIONAL TRIBUNE will be immediately notified, and informed as to the best course to pursue to obtain its benefits.

#### THE WEALTH OF NEW YORK.

It will surprise most soldiers to be told that there are three persons in New York city who could pay the entire sum required under the bounty bill, and still have more than half their property left. Senator Sharon, himself, could pay all the claims that would be presented, if the bill was passed, and would then be worth fifty millions. Senator Jones could pay it all, and have a fortune of millions.

On a single street in New York city, within the limits of a few squares, live eighteen families who derive fixed yearly incomes from an aggregate capital of nearly two hundred and fifty million dollars. Four of these capitalists are widows. Mrs. A. T. Stewart is probably the wealthiest woman in the world. She could pay all the bounties twice over, and yet she is lonely and childless. She has more dollars than there are inhabitants in the United States, and an income that would support a thousand families.

In a recent publication, is given a list of the wealthiest people, on one street, in New York, as follows:

Mr. Rhinelanders.....	\$3,000,000
Marshall O. Roberts.....	5,000,000
Moses Taylor.....	5,000,000
August Belmont.....	8,000,000
Robert L. and A. Stuart.....	5,000,000
Mrs. Paran Stevens.....	2,000,000
Amos R. Eno.....	5,000,000
John Jacob and William Astor.....	60,000,000
Mrs. A. T. Stewart.....	50,000,000
Pierre Lorillard.....	3,000,000
James Kernochan.....	2,000,000
William H. Vanderbilt.....	75,000,000
Mrs. Calvert Jones.....	2,000,000
Mrs. Mary Jones.....	2,000,000
Mr. James Gordon Bennett.....	4,000,000
Mr. Fred. Stevens.....	10,000,000
Mr. Louis Lorillard.....	1,000,000
Total.....	\$248,000,000

These are taken from the residents of Fifth Avenue alone. It is estimated that besides those named, there are over eighty persons in New York city who own, each of them, over a million of dollars worth of property. In Philadelphia there are said to be over fifty millionaires. In the city of Cleveland, with a population of only one hundred thousand inhabitants, there are nine millionaires. In San Francisco, there are four men, Messrs. Sharon, Flood, O'Brien, and Mackey, who are estimated to be worth seventy-five millions each.

And in the face of these facts, we see it continually asserted that the country is too poor to pay the bounty it owes its soldiers;—eight and one-third dollars per month.

#### PRESIDENT GRANT'S GREATEST MISTAKE.

The following is the full text of the President's message vetoing the Equalization of Bounties Bill, which was written on the last night of the Forty-Third Congress, but never reached Congress:

To the House of Representatives:

House bill 3341 is herewith returned without my approval, for the reasons—

First. That it appropriates from the Treasury a large sum of money, at a time when the revenue is insufficient for the current wants; and this proposed further drain on the Treasury—the issue of bonds authorized by the bill, to a very large and indefinite amount—would seriously embarrass the refunding operations now progressing, whereby the interest on the bonded debt is being largely reduced.

Second. I do not believe that any considerable portion of the ex-soldiers, whom it is supposed will be the beneficiaries of this appropriation, are applicants for it, but rather it would result more in a measure for the relief of claim agents or middle men, who would intervene to collect and discount the bounties granted by it.

The passage of the bill at this time is inconsistent with the measures of economy now demanded by the necessities of the country.

U. S. GRANT, President.

WASHINGTON, March 3, 1875.

#### VETERANS OF THE MEXICAN WAR.

Several bills, nearly all of the same description, have been introduced, providing for the granting of pensions to veterans of the Mexican war and their widows. The bills provide for the placing on the pension rolls the names of the surviving officers and enlisted men, including militia and volunteer, of the military and naval service of the United States, who served sixty days in the war of 1846 with Mexico, or in the Florida war, or in the Black Hawk war, and were honorably discharged; and to such other officers and soldiers as may have been personally named in any resolution of Congress for any specific service in said war, although their term of service may have been less than sixty days, and who shall subscribe an oath to support the Constitution of the United States; and the surviving widows of such officers and enlisted men, provided, that such widows shall not have remarried.

This act does not apply to any person who is receiving a pension at the rate of eight dollars or more per month; nor to any person receiving a pension less than eight dollars per month, except for the difference between the pension now received and that sum. Pensions under this act shall be at the rate of eight dollars per month, when a person is receiving a pension of less than eight dollars per month, and shall be paid to the persons entitled thereto from and after the passage of this act, during the term of their natural lives.

Before the name of any person is placed upon the pension-roll under this act, proof shall be made, under such rules and regulations as the Secretary of the Interior may prescribe, that the applicant is entitled to such a pension; and any person who shall falsely take any oath required to be taken under this act shall be guilty of perjury; and the Secretary of the Interior shall cause to be stricken from the pension-roll the name of any person whenever it shall appear, by proof satisfactory to him, that such name was put upon the roll through false or fraudulent representations as to the right of such person to a pension. The loss of a certificate of discharge will not deprive the applicant of the benefits of this act, as other proof of services performed and of an honorable discharge, if satisfactory, will be deemed sufficient.

The provisions of sections twelve and thirteen of an act entitled "An act supplementary to 'An act to grant pensions,'" approved July 4, 1864, and of sections two, three, and four of an act entitled "An act supplementary to several acts relating to pensions," approved June 6, 1866, shall be applicable to the pensions granted by this act; and no law now in existence which in any way conflicts with the provisions of this act shall be applicable to the survivors of the war with Mexico above mentioned, or to be so construed as to deprive them of the benefits of this act.

This bill is one of the most popular measures before Congress, as is shown by the number introduced in the House. Those members who have introduced bills are Messrs. Scales, of North Carolina; Felton, of Georgia; Hewitt, of Alabama; Turner and Durham, of Kentucky; Whitthorne and Riddle, of Tennessee; Sparks and Fort, of Illinois; Gunter, of Arkansas; Throckmorton, of Texas; and Luttrell, of California.

Besides this, the States of Illinois, Indiana, Missouri, Minnesota, California, Oregon, Nevada, Texas, Louisiana, Alabama, North Carolina, Tennessee, Kentucky, and Arkansas have, through their Legislatures, instructed their Senators and requested their Representatives to give their support to the bill.